एकत्र की जा रही है और सभापटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Setting up of illness Assistance Fund for the Poor

383. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Illness Assistance Fund has been set up at National and State Level to help the poor undergoing expensive medical treatment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the guidelines issued as to the eligibility of patients to receive assistance from this fund and the authority to which application has to be submitted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) National Illness Assistance Fund has been set up vide Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Resolution dated 13.1.97, which has been published in the Gazette of India (Extraordinary) (Part I - Section - I) (No. 9).

It has been provided in this Scheme that every State\U.T. (with Legislature) may set up an illness Assistance Fund, which shall be a registered society. The donation received by this society from State Govt.\U.T. Admn. will be supplemented by grant-in-aid from Central Govt. to the extent of 50% of the contribution made by the State Govt.\U.T. subject to a maximum of Rs. 5 crores for States which have a larger portion of population living below poverty line and of Rs. 2 crores for other State\UTs. The poverty line shall be as defined by Planning Commission. The Fund could also be subscribed by individuals corporate bodies and other national\international philanthropic organisation. The contributions received by this Fund would be exempted from payment of Income Tax under section 80(G) of Income Tax Act. The accounts of the society would be audited by A.G. of the State\U.T. every year.

This Fund would release financial assistance to patients, below poverty line, living in India, suffering from life-threatening diseases for undergoing medical treatment at any of the superspeciality Hospitals\Institutes or other Govt.\private Hospitals, participating in the Scheme. The assistance will be in the form of a one-time grant which will be released to the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, in which the treatment has been received.

A provision of Rs. 25 crores has been made in the budget grant of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare during 1996-97 for release of grant-in-aid to State\UT.

It has also been decided that a National Illness Assistance Fund should be set up with an initial donation from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Rs. 5 crores. This Fund could also be subscribed by individuals, corporate bodies and non-corporate bodies. The contributions made to this fund will also be exempt from payment of Income Tax under section 80(G) of Income Tax Act. The Management Committee of NIAF will be chaired by Union Health Minister. The NIAF will be registered Society and its accounts will be subject to audit by C&AG every year.

Wherever the quantum of financial assistance to a poor patient is less than Rs. 1.5 lakhs, the release will be done by the Fund at the State/U.T. level and if the quantum of assistance is in excess of Rs. 1.5 lakhs, in an individual case, the case will be recommended to NIAF at the Centre.

NIAF will also decide about the budget outlay for grant of similar assistance to be released to such population living in UTs without Legislature.

Applications for necessary financial assistance under this Scheme can be addressed to the Illness Assistance Fund of the respective State\UT or NIAF.

Policy for providing Medical Care for All

384. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are finalising a New Health Policy to provide medical care to all;

(b) if so, the details of the present status of the proposal;

(c) details of thrust areas in terms of extending coverage of basic health facilities for rural and urban poor; and

(d) details of National Health Schemes to be continued with renewed thrust and changes under consideration,

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) In view of the new priorities which have emerged in the health sector and keeping in mind the status of attainment of various goals it has been decided to undertake an exercise leading to the revision of the policy. This is at a preliminary stage.

(c) The thrust areas in the health sector inter-alia include measures to contain emerging and re-emerging diseases, improvement of surveillance and epidemic response systems, reproductive and child health, capacity building of institutions and health infrastructure and greater health education.

(d) The major National Health Programmes for control/eradication of communicable and non-communicable diseases like malaria, T.B., leprosy, blindness, AIDs, cancer and the Family Welfare programmes will continue with much vigour.

Financial Assistance From the Discretionary Quota of the Minister

385. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many people have sought financial assistance for major operation\treatment from the discretionary grant of the Heatlh Minister during 1993 to December, 1996;

(b) total number of beneficiaries under the said discretionary grant during the said year;

(c) total amount released for the said grant during the said year;

(d) whether it is a fact that the applications for the said grant from the poor persons were not processed in time even after submitting all the required documents; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Ministry to release grant well in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) The total number of people who have sought financial assistance for major operation\treatment from discretionary grant of Health Minister during 1995 to December, 1996 is 4544 only.

(b) The total number of persons benefitted under the said scheme of discretionary grant during the said period is 690 only.

(c) The total amount released under the said scheme of grant during the said period is Rs. 80,25,887/- (Rupees eighty lakhs twenty five thousands eight hundred eighty seven only).

(d) and (e) No, Applications for financial assistance are processed promptly. Immediately on receipt of applications with complete information/documents the cases are submitted for consideration of Hon'ble Health Minister with the recommendations of Directorate General of Health Services. The commitment letters of sanctioned amount is issued to the concerned hospital for treatment\operation of the patients with the request to send the information whether the patient has been admitted. On getting confirmation from the hospital that the patient has been admitted, amount of sanctioned grant is immediately released to the hospital.

Steps to Educate people for Taking Preventive Measure Against Aids

386. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report appearing in the Indian Express dated 23rd December, 1996, under the caption "study points given picture of AIDS in India"; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to properly educate the people about it and also to take precautionary and preventive steps to contain the spread of the dreadful and suicidal disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All the media of communication including interpersonal communication are being used both by Central and State Government to create public awareness about how HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) spread, how these can be prevented and